

1822, when the first settlements were formed on the banks of the Red River, down to 1858, when the trade monopoly of the Hudson Bay Company ceased to exist, there was witnessed the development of a nationality—for it was a distinct nationality, to all intents and purposes. From their fathers they inherited many of the virtues of the races from which they sprung, and from their alliances with the Indian women, their descendants had, of course, inherited many of the features of the Indian population. Well, Sir, it would be wrong for anyone to suppose that these people had no idea of political institutions. They were under the sway of the Hudson Bay Company, which was eminently and essentially a trading company; and the Hudson Bay Company was not the company to offer the colonists any part of the Territories which had been granted to it by Charles II. However, when that colony grew into existence, the same institutions were given; and what were they? The legislative as well as the executive power was vested in the Governor and the council for the colony of Assiniboia, as it was called, until 1870, when those Territories were annexed to Canada. The councillors were seventeen in number, although afterwards they became twenty-one. These councillors, as well as the Governor of the colony, were appointed by the committee of the Hudson Bay Company; and, mark you, representation was then a principal feature of the political institutions of the country. The councillors were taken as representing all the various classes in the settlement. Representative men were nominated by the directors of the Hudson Bay Company from the various elements of nationality then existing in the colony—from the Scotch, the French half-breeds, and some of the foreign elements; and the recorder or chief justice of the Territory, as well as the two bishops, the Catholic bishop and the Anglican bishop, representing the religious element then existing, were made councillors. Therefore, when we see it stated in the press, and when the idea has been spread amongst the population of Canada, that those people, in 1870, had no idea of political institutions, public opinion has been greatly deceived and misled. Representative institutions were given to them, because they had a strong sense of justice, and all their rights and privileges, their national features and instincts, were represented in that council. Therefore, we may well infer that they had some correct idea of political government and some idea that their political rights should be respected when the transfer of the country to Canada took place. Now, it seems quite a surprise to us that that population should have existed for 50 years without any organisation, either judicial or political. I have stated what the political institutions were: the judiciary was equally simple and rudimentary, and yet it was sufficient to meet the wants of that population. That population had strong religious ideas, and you know, Sir, that hard life engenders naturally high morals; and morality is found to exist among those people, whose life is moral and frugal, and not tainted with the luxuries which we, amongst ourselves, call civilisation. Their judiciary consisted of a recorder or chief justice, if you may call him so, and some petty magistrates, and these formed the courts in the settlement. The recorder was appointed by the Hudson Bay Company in London, and had a seat in the council, when he had to perform duties there similar to those of the Attorneys General in the old Provinces; in fact, the recorder was the legal adviser of that council. They had the full jury system; no person could be tried except by his peers; and we may see, by consulting the history of those times, that this was the case. It may be said that those people had not the idea of our high civilisation. Well, Sir, upon that point there may be some difference of opinion. However, by the by-laws or regulations issued by that council the sale of liquor was strictly prohibited amongst the Indians, and was punished with the utmost severity. The granting of licenses—and I am sure that this

will be a piece of very gratifying news to the prohibitionist members of this House—was also regulated, to the utmost extent, and it was surrounded with all possible safeguards. I believe we, in the eastern Provinces, may borrow from the regulations of that uncivilised council a good many features which would prove very satisfactory. In fact, after the organisation of the Province of Manitoba, the Government of that Province could not do anything better than embody in its own laws the very regulations that were issued by the council of Assiniboia. Under that political and social organisation, that people lived and increased for nearly forty years. There was no political strife amongst them; they had a paternal Government, which was sufficient for all their requirements, whether as leading an agricultural life or a hunting life on the prairie. They had no lawyers, no newspapers, no demagogues, no politicians, no grits.

Mr. HACKETT. The last was a blessing.

Mr. ROYAL. No doubt, a great blessing. They had no communication with the rest of the world; their complete isolation prevented them from enjoying the luxuries of our civilisation, but it made the population harmonious, united, sober, and fully convinced that liberty is only practicable with a corresponding sum of protection, and that to do justice to various interests requires a certain amount of representation from various classes, in a country obliged to protect themselves from the raids of the Indians. The public spirit of these people was dignified and self-confident. The country was deemed to be theirs, as they had to defend it unassisted, and it is a remarkable fact that those people, who numbered from 12,000 to 15,000, had to defend themselves against the incursions of the powerful warlike tribes in the west. The Hudson Bay Company had but one interest, that of making money and securing the most valuable export of furs from the Territory every year. The company had a renewal of the monopoly from 1838 to 1858, and such was then the condition of that people living in harmony together, having but few wants, and those wants fully satisfied. In fact, the existence of that people would be a most interesting study for any writer on political economy. They had no exports; their productions were consumed by the local market, and, besides, they had a circulation only of a certain character. In 1858 the extinction of that monopoly induced a certain number of American traders, and also some Canadian adventurers, to go through St. Paul to that Territory. The civilisation was not, perhaps, that which we are sometimes so proud of. It may have been a better one, if, by civilisation, we understand the greatest possible degree of order, and happiness in all the ranks of society; if by civilisation we understand a community so well regulated that law seems to touch lightly upon everyone, and is cheerfully obeyed by all; if by civilisation we understand, people in which the authority is respected, the family strong and united, the wants few, and all easily satisfied; if by civilisation we understand a community where all the individuals love their country, fight for its defence, revere its institutions, and do not cast an eye of envy upon other nations and other countries; if by civilisation we understand a people attached to its religion, a people whose manners, social enjoyments and amusements exhibit a high degree of morality, mutual benevolence and simplicity as well; if by civilisation we understand a nation which produces all the necessaries of life with the least degree of toil, hardships and hire of one free man to another, and where golden mediocrity is to be found in every man's home; the civilisation which was then flourishing on the shores of the Red River was certainly not one of fine public or private construction, of great activity of intelligence, of literature and arts, of steamboats, railways and telegraphs: but I dare say that the people to be found there were